

REMARKS

Claims 17-53 are pending in this application. Claims 1-16 have been cancelled and claims 17-53 have been added by this amendment. Applicant reserves the right to reintroduce claims of comparable scope to the original claims in a continuation or other related application.

Applicant submitted a preliminary amendment to the USPTO on January 24, 2000, which canceled claims 1-16 and added new claims 17-53. At that time, Applicant was not aware that the Office Action dated January 4, 2000 had been mailed. Applicant therefore includes the same amendments herein as included in the preliminary amendment and requests that the preliminary amendment of 1/24/2000 be ignored.

The Examiner stated that the application does not contain an abstract of the disclosure as required by 37 CFR 1.72(b). Accordingly, Applicant has amended the specification to include an abstract, as provided on the separate sheet attached hereto.

The Examiner objected to claims 4-8 and 12-16 under 37 CFR 1.75(c) as being an improper form as being a multiple dependent claim depending upon another multiple dependent claim. Claims 4-8 and 12-16 have been cancelled herein, and Applicant requests that the objection be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1-3 have been cancelled herein, and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-3 and 9-11 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Rohen (U.S. Patent No. 5,186,692). Claims 1-3 and 9-11 have been cancelled herein, and Applicant requests that the rejection be withdrawn.

Applicant has added claims 17-53 with this amendment. Claims 17 recites a computer mouse device including a housing having a lower portion and a casing portion, a sensor that tracks motion of the housing, and an actuator that generates motion of the casing in a direction substantially orthogonal to the flat surface, thereby delivering a tactile sensation in response to a received sensory feedback signal.

The references cited by the Examiner are not believed to disclose or suggest the invention of claim 17. For example, Rohen discloses a mouse having a tactile feedback area 33 (see Figs.

2-4). In one embodiment, the feedback is a vibration that varies in intensity and/or frequency from a voice coil loudspeaker device (col. 6, lines 23-38, Fig. 4). However, the tactile feedback area 33 is a small area large enough only for a fingertip, and is located on the side of the mouse, thus providing vibrations in a direction parallel to the x-y motion of the mouse and to the surface on which the mouse rests. Applicant's claim 17 recites a housing having a lower portion and a casing portion engaged by a user's palm, and recites generating motion of the casing in a direction substantially orthogonal to the flat surface on which the mouse moves. Thus, a greater portion of the mouse is moved (the palm-contacted casing portion) than the small fingertip area of Rohen, allowing a greater and more compelling tactile effect to be provided to the user. Furthermore, Applicant's motion is orthogonal to the plane of motion, thus providing forces that do not interfere with the x-y motion of the mouse and do not interfere with the user's control of the cursor. For these reasons, Applicant believes claim 17 is patentable over Rohen. Claims 18-29 are dependent from claim 17 and are believed patentable for at least the same reasons and for additional reasons.

Claims 30-42 recite a computer mouse including elements similar to those recited in claims 17-29, and are believed patentable for at least similar reasons. Claims 43-53 recite a method for providing tactile feedback to a user of a mouse device which is similar to claim 17, and are believed patentable for at least similar reasons.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes that all pending claims are allowable and respectfully requests a Notice of Allowance from the Examiner. Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite the prosecution of this application, the undersigned can be reached at the telephone number set out below.

Respectfully submitted,



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